

Ross falls from sectional tourney

By BOB MARKER

Staff writer

FINDLAY — The third time was not charming for Fremont Ross Saturday in the Division I Sectional Soccer Tournament.

Tiffin Columbian defeated Ross for the third time this season 2-1, surviving a late rally by the Little Giants in the sectional first round.

The Tornadoes defeated Ross 7-1 in the first match of the season — the first soccer match in Ross school history — and 1-0 later in the regular season.

This time around, Columbian took a 2-0 lead on goals by Roger Brown with 11 minutes remaining in the first half and by Erik Marx with 16½ minutes remaining in the game.

Ross cut the deficit in half on Nate Sorg's penalty kick with just over a minute left in the game. Sorg, on a breakaway, was tackled from behind a yard into the goalie box to set up the free shot.

The win was the first in sectional tournament play for the nine-year-old Columbian program. The Tornadoes, coached

by Ed Cahill and Bill Bleyle, will take an 8-8 record against Mansfield in the second round at 7 p.m., Tuesday, at the Findlay field.

"We are thrilled with the win," Cahill said.

"We did get a good draw," Cahill admitted, "but we knew the Fremont kids were going to play well; they played well the last time we played them."

Ross finished its first season 5-12-1.

"It was a good game, good game," Ross coach Victor Huntley said. "I think we played equal. The only thing is, we did not put the pressure on that we should have. Then we did not take enough shots, especially in the second half, and then time ran out on us."

Columbian's pressurized offense kept Ross on the defense most of the second half. The Tornadoes fired 17 shots at Ross goalie Brian Newman with the senior coming up with 11 saves.

Despite the pressure, the Little Giants defense did not crack until Brown dribbled around the Ross back line and beat Newman

with a shot to the left corner from 3 yards out, giving Columbian a 1-0 halftime lead.

The Little Giants had just two shots in the first half — both on direct kicks by Craig Moravec — but Columbian goalie Greg Bleyle smothered both shots.

Ross, despite a late offensive surge, was still outshot 12-6 in the second 40-minute half.

Marx scored from 5 yards out on the right off a pass from Matt Brown, putting Ross down 2-0.

Eric Keiser got off a trio of shots, Jon Matney and Jason Carnahan one each for Ross in the second half but only Sorg was able to get one past Bleyle on the penalty kick. Ross goalie Fred Schnee had five saves in the second half.

Huntley was disappointed with the loss but happy about the Little Giants' first season.

"It was fantastic," he said. "I did not expect to win so many games. Going out for the first time, a lot of teams thought we were the new kids on the block and could run over us — that was a mistake they made."